

**House Resolution**

**No. 23**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Bradford**

August 8, 2013

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House Resolution No. 23—Relative to youth.

1       WHEREAS, The criminalization of African American, Latino,  
2 and Asian and Pacific Islander youth continues to pervade our  
3 social, educational, political, and cultural systems; and

4       WHEREAS, Boys and men of color throughout California  
5 continue to face unnecessary hurdles in education, in opportunities  
6 to work, in public safety, and in other areas based on preconceived  
7 notions and fear; and

8       WHEREAS, The verdict in the case against George Zimmerman  
9 for the killing of Trayvon Martin was deeply troubling to many  
10 young people and to Californians in general. Many have interpreted  
11 the ruling to signify that there are two separate but unequal justice  
12 systems for whites and nonwhites, that fearing a black and brown  
13 youth can justify the taking of a life, and that simply walking down  
14 the street or wearing certain clothes is viewed as criminal; and

15       WHEREAS, California’s boys and men of color face unique  
16 barriers on their road to adulthood. They are more likely to grow  
17 up in neighborhoods marked by poverty, violence, underfunded  
18 schools, and low-wage jobs; and

19       WHEREAS, In California, 35 percent of African American  
20 youth and 26 percent of Latino youth do not graduate from high  
21 school; and

22       WHEREAS, Young African American men experience homicide  
23 rates at least 16 times greater than that of young white men; and

1 WHEREAS, Racial profiling continues to exist throughout this  
2 state, and our young people deserve better; and

3 WHEREAS, It is essential that all Californians examine their  
4 prejudices and biases so that we can work toward a world in which  
5 all people are judged by the content of their character and their  
6 actions, and not by the color of their skin; and

7 WHEREAS, All lives are valuable, and none are disposable;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, All people, regardless of the color of their skin,  
10 should be able to enjoy the basic liberty that many of us take for  
11 granted, including the freedom to walk down the street; and

12 WHEREAS, Laws like Florida's Stand Your Ground law risk  
13 escalating minor confrontations with tragic results. We need to  
14 find ways to defuse conflicts, and not escalate them; and

15 WHEREAS, The best way to honor the memory of Trayvon  
16 Martin is to channel our pain and frustration into our work to create  
17 an inclusive California in which our communities need not fear  
18 our sons and brothers walking down the street; and

19 WHEREAS, Trayvon Martin's death is not in vain. The tragedy  
20 is a catalyst to create a California that embraces and invests in the  
21 health and well-being of all young people. They are a source of  
22 strength, creativity, and economic dynamism, and not a group that  
23 should be feared or condemned. California's diversity is its greatest  
24 strength and a competitive advantage; and

25 WHEREAS, The Legislature is taking action through legislation,  
26 budget decisions, and through the Legislative oversight function  
27 to ensure that the needs of California's boys and men of color are  
28 a priority in state investments and programs; and

29 WHEREAS, The Assembly has established the Select  
30 Committee on the Status of Boys and Men of Color to help put  
31 our young people on a road to a healthy and successful adulthood  
32 because successful young people are not born, they are nurtured;  
33 now, therefore, be it

34 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the  
35 Assembly encourages the Select Committee on the Status of Boys  
36 and Men of Color to continue to advance its legislative agenda to  
37 improve the lives of young people of color, including its work to  
38 reduce the use of policies and practices that push boys out of school  
39 and to instead promote common sense discipline that keeps pupils  
40 in school and on track; and be it further

1     *Resolved*, That the Assembly encourages the Select Committee  
2 on the Status of Boys and Men of Color to deepen its commitment  
3 to prepare young men of color for success in the workplace and  
4 in the marketplace and to increase the numbers of young men of  
5 color who are prepared for jobs and professional careers in the  
6 health, education, and green infrastructure sectors; and be it further

7     *Resolved*, That the Assembly further encourages the Select  
8 Committee on the Status of Boys and Men of Color to support  
9 growing state and national efforts to shine a spotlight on the needs  
10 and aspirations of young men of color across the United States,  
11 including the newly formed Congressional Caucus on Black Men  
12 and Boys; and be it further

13     *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
14 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.